

Carleton University
Winter 2020
Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies

WGST5907: Researching Women's and Gender Issues

Thursdays 8:35am-11:25am
Location: Dunton Tower 1419

Instructor: Megan Rivers-Moore
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Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30pm-2:30pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This course is structured as a graduate seminar to explore implications and challenges of research for feminism and of feminism for research. All course participants direct the course: the instructor, guest lecturers, and, most importantly, the students. We will explore various feminist epistemologies and how feminist scholars challenge dominant theories of knowledge. The course will also introduce students to common methodologies employed in the humanities and social sciences, and how those methods have been informed by feminist theories. This course outline includes components developed by my colleagues Amrita Hari and Grace Adeniyi Ogunyankin. I acknowledge their excellent work and thank them for their generosity.

Course Format:

This seminar course is structured as a combination of lectures, presentations, and class discussions. **Your contributions in class are key and it is essential that you do the assigned readings for each week.** The lectures will incorporate a variety of teaching and learning material and techniques, including in-class activities, video clips and documentaries. This is an intensive course with many readings and practical assignments, the success of which depends on everyone's attendance and active participation.

Course Goals:

- To explore how feminist theory and politics inform research questions and methodological choices
- To identify a research interest, frame research questions, and discuss ethical issues
- To analyze and interpret qualitative data
- To recognize the most appropriate methods for conducting research in your field of interest and explain the role of method in directing research outcomes

- To think critically about how and by whom knowledge is produced; the links between the researcher and the researched; the ethical, political, and epistemological issues that arise when conducting research; and the relationship of knowledge production to questions of power, identity, and social change.

Required texts:

All of the readings for this course are available online on Ares through the cuLearn site for this course. It is your responsibility to go through the syllabus carefully and ensure that you make the time to get and read the material. You are advised to print out and bring online readings and/or take extensive notes for full classroom discussion. Please note any films shown in class are considered course texts.

Evaluation

Seminar participation and discussion questions – 10%
Online TCPS training – 5% January 30
Situating knowledge production essay – 15% February 6
Methods assignments – 40%
 Coding workshop – 10% February 27
 Interview exercise – 10% March 5
 Observation – 10% March 12
 Discourse analysis – 10% March 19
Research grant presentation 10% March 26
Research grant proposal 20% April 6

Please see the assignment sheet for a detailed description.

Late policy: Please make a careful note of due dates for assignments. Late papers will be penalized unless you have been granted permission for an extension *before* the due date. The late penalty for final papers is 5% per day, including weekends. No late assignments will be accepted after ten days. Please note that special permission for extensions on assignments will not be granted without proper and verifiable documentation.

All assignments must be submitted via cuLearn. Assignments must be typed in 12 point font, preferably in Times New Roman (or another standard font) with one inch margins.

All final grades are subject to approval by the Dean.

The Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's and Gender Studies considers a B- to be the minimum grade for a course credited toward the Master's degree.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR GRADES AS A GRADUATE STUDENT:

A+ = 90-100 Excellent

A = 85-89; A- = 80-84 Good

B+ = 77-79; B = 73-76 Adequate

B- = 70-72 Poor

Below B- = Failure

Email Policy and Etiquette

Emails will be returned within two business days (48 hours, excluding weekends and holidays). Only emails from official Carleton University email addresses will be answered. Please include your full name, student number, and course code in the email. Please use full sentences and formal language.

I encourage you to think twice before emailing me. Is your question answered in the syllabus? That will make me cranky. Is this a question with an answer that would benefit other students? Then ask it in class. Please note that while I am not available immediately after class, you are very welcome to make my office hours less lonely.

Copyright statement

Please note: classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by instructors, guests and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, exams and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only.

****Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s). ****

In the interest of creating a respectful learning environment as well as to protect intellectual copyright, I do not allow audio or video recording of course lectures or presentations in any format, openly or surreptitiously, in whole or in part, without my prior permission. If you would like to record any part of the course, come see me during my office hours and we will talk about it. Please be ready to explain what specifically you would like to record, for what reason (for example, so that you can listen again to a specific lecture to make sure you got all the important information), and what you plan to do with it afterwards (for example, delete it). Also, please keep in mind that I, Megan Rivers-Moore, hold copyright over the course materials, including the syllabus, lectures and slides that form part of this course, and that course materials (both paper and

digital) are meant only for your private study and research.

Course Schedule

1. January 9 Introduction to the course and to each other

2. January 16 Feminist Epistemologies: critiques of the scientific method

Harding, S. (1986). The instability of the analytical categories of feminist theory. *Signs*, 11(4): 645-664.

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3): 575-599.

Oakley, A. (1998). Gender, methodology and people's ways of knowing: Some problems with feminism and the paradigm debate in social science. *Sociology*, 32(4): 707-731.

3. January 23 Feminist Epistemologies: Postcolonial and decolonial approaches (Online TCPS training this week)

Bannerji, H. (1995) But Who Speaks for Us? Experience and Agency in Conventional Feminist Paradigms. In *Thinking Through Essays on Feminism: Essays on Feminism, Marxism and Anti-racism*, Toronto: Canada Scholar's Press and Women's Press, pp. 56-91.

McCann, H. (2016). Epistemology of the Subject: Queer Theory's Challenge to Feminist Sociology. *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly*, 44(3): 224–243.

Riddell, J.K. et al (2017). Laying the Groundwork: A Practical Guide for Ethical Research with Indigenous Communities. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*. 8(2): 5-20.

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (1999). Research through imperial eyes. In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London & New York: Zed Books, pp. 44-60.

4. January 30 Positionality and Reflexivity; Insider/outsider debates (Visit from the research ethics office)

Adeniyi Ogunyankin, G. (2019). In/Out of 'Nigeria': Transnational research and the politics of identity and knowledge production. *Gender, Place & Culture* 26 (10): 1386-1401.

Mullings, B. (1999). Insider or outsider, both or neither: Some dilemmas of interviewing in a cross-cultural setting. *Geoforum*, 30: 337-350.

Scott, J. W. (1991). The evidence of experience. *Critical inquiry*, 17(4): 773-797.

Sherif, B. (2001). The ambiguity of boundaries in the fieldwork experience: Establishing rapport and negotiating insider/outsider status. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 7(4): 436-447.

5. February 6 Mixed Methods Research – Dr. Kate Hardy

Hardy, K. TBA

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2005). On becoming a pragmatic researcher: The importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(5): 375-387.

Sprague, J. (2005). Chapter 4: How feminists count: Critical Strategies for Quantitative Methods. *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers - Bridging Differences*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 81-118.

6. February 13 Interviews and Focus groups

(Interview workshop in class)

Chase, S. E. (2003). Taking narrative seriously: Consequences for method and theory in interview studies. *Turning points in qualitative research: Tying knots in a handkerchief*, Walnut Creek: AltaMira, pp. 273-296.

Hesse-Biber, S. (2007). The practice of in-depth interviewing, *Feminist research practice: a primer*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage, pp. 223-248.

Montell, F. (1999). Focus group interviews: A new feminist method. *NWSA Journal*, 11(1): 44-71.

7. February 20 Winter break

8. February 27 NVivo workshop

9. March 5 Ethnography

(Observation assignment)

Ahmed, K. (2018). Minding the gap at the limits of observation. In *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, pp.160-166.

Avishai, O., Gerber, L., & J. Randles. (2012). The Feminist Ethnographer's Dilemma: Reconciling Progressive Research Agendas With Fieldwork Realities. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*. 42(4): 394-426.

Christensen, T. (2018). Collateral damage: preparing your friends and family for your Ethnography. *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, pp. 25-31.

Dolson, M. (2018). The role of unpredictability in ethnographic fieldwork. *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*, Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, pp.17-24.

Vincent, Ben and Sonja Erikainen (2018). Gender, love, and sex: Using duoethnography to research gender and sexuality experiences of transgender relationships. *Sexualities*. 1-16.

10. March 12 Content and Discourse analysis

(Museum visit)

Baird, Barbara and Erica Millar (2018). More than stigma: Interrogating counter narratives of abortion. *Sexualities*. 1-17.

- Krippendorff, K. (2019). Introduction and chapter 1. In *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. London: Sage, pp. 1-23.
- Rose, G. (2016). Discourse analysis 2: Institutions and Ways of Seeing. In *Visual Methodologies*. London: Sage, pp. 220-252.

11. March 19 Collaborative research

- Alexander, Jacqui M. and Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. (2010). Cartographies of Knowledge and Power: Transnational Feminism as Radical Praxis. In *Critical Transnational Feminist Praxis*, edited by Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar. Albany: SUNY, pp. 23-45
- Gustafson, D. L., & Brunger, F. (2014). Ethics, "Vulnerability," and Feminist Participatory Action Research With a Disability Community. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24(7): 997–1005.
- Nagar, Richa. (2003). Collaboration Across Borders: Moving Beyond Positionality. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 24(3): 356-372.
- Spalter-Roth, R & Hartmann, H. (1996). "Small Happinesses: The Feminist Struggle to Integrate Social Research with Social Activism." *Feminism and Social Change: Bridging Theory and Practice*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, pp. 206-224.

12. March 26 Presentations

13. April 2 Extended office hours

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/> for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence, which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Read more about academic integrity here:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>